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Trusting Relationships, Trusting What You Know

Trust has become a popular word in educational discourse these days. This is a fascinating phenomenon, given the current political climate of education, which is deeply distrusting of administrators, teachers, and children. As a society, we no longer trust principals to make curricular decisions for their schools, as is evidenced by districtwide, citywide, and statewide curricular initiatives such as teacher guides, decisions to purchase uniform textbooks, and curriculum plans for all teachers. We no longer trust teachers to make curricular and classroom decisions, as is evidenced by the widespread implementation of standardized curricula. The aggressive proliferation of standardized testing similarly communicates our profound cultural distrust of teachers' capacity to teach. The message proclaimed by these tests is that teachers do not know what children need to learn nor can they figure out how to assess whether children are indeed learning. Finally and most disturbingly, we are losing trust in children's drive to learn, as is evidenced by the implementation of high-stakes testing across the country, which suggests that unless children are threatened with the dire consequences of failing or not graduating, they will not learn.

It is in this climate that we have seen a publishing flurry surrounding the notion of trust.[1] In an educational climate that has devastatingly eroded this foundation of the teaching-learning enterprise, teachers and researchers are assiduously working to grasp,

describe, resurrect, recreate, or otherwise hold on to what we know sustains human capacity to construct knowledge.

This book enters this discourse on trust with a story and a theory. The story in this book, offered in the form of conversation between children and a researcher, paints an illustration, rich in design and detail, of what trusting relationships with self, peers, and teachers look like. It portrays the landscape of the relational context of teaching and learning. The telling of this story is the centerpiece of this book and will be found in the chapters that follow.

The theory goes something like this: our deepest hope for our children is that they will construct knowledge in school about themselves, their community, and the world that is robust, resilient, and creative. This knowledge will help them become members of society who can improve our world, who can participate in our democracy, and who can take responsibility in an increasingly complex society. Children must learn to trust this knowledge so that they can use it, take risks, and allow it to grow and change. They need to trust what they know, because as they grow, it is this knowledge that will help them form the relationships that will sustain them as adults—relationships with friends and partners, relationships in their work world, and relationships with community and culture at large.

The theory continues: for children to develop trustworthy knowledge, they must learn in the context of trustworthy relationships. School is often children's first community outside of home, in which they learn the give and take of communal living, of getting along, of sharing, of listening to divergent opinions, of building new ideas in a social environment. The interconnections between trust in self and trust in others are complex and strong. I will argue in this chapter that the learning process is inherently relational; it is a process embedded in students' braided relationships with self, teachers, and peers. The prevailing political voices assert that testing children will build the foundation of strong knowledge;

in contrast, this theory argues that resilient, trustworthy relationships in school are the bedrock of learning.

The Relational Learner: Toward a New Understanding of Schooling

The theory of this book posits a learning self that is inherently relational. Drawing on the work of philosophers, psychologists, and educational researchers, this theory took form while I was listening to the stories of the students in this book. José's words illustrate the notion of the relational learning self expressed by the students:

> You tell them what you're good at, and they tell you what they think you're good at, and you can make something out of that. It's like they have the spice and you have the whole ingredient, and if you put it together, . . . you have yourself.

José's eloquent statement illustrates that in the interchange between teacher and student, "something" meaningful is made; "you have yourself." He tells us that in the relational interchange of the classroom, children's selves continue to be constructed. With elegant simplicity, José's comments reveal a complex idea that represents a significant shift in paradigm for both psychological theory and educational practice: that the learning self is constructed and develops *within* the relationships of classroom life. Comments such as José's also triggered a fundamental shift in my own thinking as a teacher and researcher.

The very first paper I wrote in graduate school that investigated the effect of self-assessment work on student learning was called "Encouraging Autonomous Learners." When I compare that title with the title of this volume, I see tangible evidence of the paradigm shift I experienced in doing this research. Early in my research, I hypothesized that student self-assessment work stimulated learners

to become more autonomous in their thinking, less dependent on the opinions and judgments of teachers and peers. This was a hypothesis with strong support in the literature on student self-regulation.[2] Yet the students in this study described self-assessment work as an illustration of their evolving understandings of the ways that classroom relationships shaped their learning. My early assumptions grew out of the traditional psychological notion of the development of self—that the goal of development was individuation and separation of self. Even in the most popular sociocognitive conceptions of schooling, the goal of interaction and social relationships was the internalization or appropriation of the lessons learned. The model suggests a taking in of the outside world, of making it one's own.[3] This is the pinnacle of development. Yet the students in this study challenge this notion of development. Their stories and ideas about classroom relationships reflect an alternate understanding of the learning self; it is a relational learning self.

In traditional western psychology, the achievement of autonomy, individuation, and separation from those most beloved has been viewed as the highest degree of development of the human self.[4] Over the past three decades, contemporary relational theorists have sought to redefine the notion of self and its development.[5] In this effort, researchers and clinicians have rethought conceptions of psychotherapy,[6] psychoanalysis,[7] infant development,[8] boys'[9] and girls'[10] development. A common thread running through this relational orientation is that the growth of the human self is embedded in and inextricably linked with relationships with others, particularly parents, caregivers, and partners. In this orientation, development of self is asserted not by autonomy and separation but rather by construction, defining, and refining of relationships. Jean Baker Miller and Irene Stiver articulate this notion of self and relationship clearly:

> In our view, the goal of development is not forming a separated self or finding gratification, but something else

> altogether—the ability to participate actively in relationships that foster the well-being of everyone involved. Our fundamental notions of who we are are not formed in the process of separation from others, but within the mutual interplay of relationships with others. *In short, the goal is not for the individual to grow out of relationships, but to grow into them. As the relationships grow, so grows the individual.* Participating in growth-fostering relationships is both the source and the goal of development.[11] [italics added]

The children in this book validate Miller and Stiver's hypothesis by describing how the aspects of self that they assert in school grow and wither in the relational dynamic of their classrooms. They suggest that their reading of these relationships not only shapes what can be said and known within those relationships but can also support and stunt the development of self that happens within those relationships.[12] This notion of the relational self can be seen most profoundly in the students' examination of teachers' motives, expectations, likes and dislikes, and assumptions. In such an examination, the students understand that teachers "experience" them and form conceptions of students' sense of self that may or may not conform with the students' own conceptions of self. Further, the extent to which students can access their teachers' conceptualizations shapes the way they respond to their teachers, the knowledge they share, and the internal truths they juggle.

Essentially, a central aspect of self, the relational learner, is constructed within relationships. Just as the theory of the relational self postulates that the self is born and develops in the cradle and life of relationships, so the notion of the relational learner postulates that the learning self is constructed and developed within the relationships of school. In both constructs, the developmental marker of growth is participation in mutually empathic, "growth-fostering" or learning-enhancing relationships.[13] That is, the fundamental

relationships of school shape the ways that students learn to see themselves as effective participants in the learning process who have the capacity to develop their own ideas, articulate these ideas, and participate in collective thinking.

This paradigm does not ignore students' individuality or need to assert and construct their own meaning of their experiences. Rather, this approach acknowledges that an individual's construction of meaning is embedded in the web of relationships in school. Drawing on the work of Antonio Damasio, Carol Gilligan describes the "core sense of self" as "a voice, the ability to initiate action and to register experience."[14] This core sense of self possesses the capacity for "awareness" of registering or making meaning of the experience. This awareness is akin to knowing what you know, being connected to your own thoughts, feelings, emotions, ideas, and curiosity. When a person is most wide awake,[15] most aware, present, she can trust this knowledge; she is fully connected. As the children in this study tell us, the construction of this awareness of their own experience is inherently woven into the tapestry of school relationships. As such, the relational learner is one who initiates action, makes meaning of his experience, and develops awareness of this experience in an ongoing, mutually regulatory web of school relationships. To separate the core sense of self of the learner from the flow of learning relationships would be, in Gilligan's words, "psychologically incoherent."[16] John Dewey echoes this notion of psychological incoherence in the divided self. When the self is split or divided, the self becomes "a divided world, a world whose parts and aspects do not hang together, . . . at once a sign and a cause of a divided personality. When the splitting-up reaches a certain point we call the person insane."[17] In explaining Dewey's ideas, Harriet Cuffaro suggests that "self is not an isolated being. It is always of and with others."[18] In the context and constant interplay of school relationships, the student develops her learning self. It is our mission as teachers to help students construct and maintain unified learning selves that

offer them the opportunity to construct the strongest, most trustworthy knowledge.

The Place of Relationships in Learning

To unpack this notion of the relational learning self, we must come to a shared understanding of the term *relationship*. My understanding of relationship is drawn from multiple disciplines that cross the boundaries of philosophy, psychology, and educational theory.

Relationship with Self

First, let us consider relationship in the context of a student's connection to self, his own knowledge and learning. John Dewey's theory of reflective thinking offers a useful construct for considering this facet of relationship: relationship with one's thinking is a process of making connections between previous knowledge and new ideas one confronts. Dewey suggests that learning depends on the connections that a student makes between past experiences and present challenges.[19] He teaches us, "Increase of the store of meanings makes us conscious of new problems, while only through translation of the new perplexities into what is already familiar and plain do we understand or solve these problems. This is the constant spiral movement of knowledge."[20]

Dewey's theory of reflective thinking emphasizes that the meaning humans make of experience is dependent on the connections we can make with what we have known and experienced in the past. There is an integral process of making connection with self that underlies this process. This view of knowledge construction is aligned with Damasio's notion of "core sense of self."[21] In the process of making connections between past and present experiences, a student develops a relationship with her knowledge as well as with her own self as an active agent in her learning.[22] If we consider relationship with self as a process of making connections, both

cognitive and affective, then it is important to identify the forces that facilitate, impede, and shape these connections.

Relationship with Others

As I discussed earlier, the human sense of self is deeply embedded in and inherently connected with the primary relationships in a person's life.[23] In fact, separating this discussion into the categories of "relationship with self" and "relationship with other" is an artificial separation, necessitated by the need to clearly define the notion of relationship. In infancy and toddlerhood, significant relationships, such as those with primary caregivers, begin to shape children's relationship with self. When children enter school, their relationships with self continue to be shaped by their school relationships (relationships with peers and teachers).[24] In this context, students' relational learning selves are asserted and continue to grow. It is these learning relationships that can both help students connect to what they know and lead them to disconnect or dissociate from what they know.[25]

These learning relationships are the second facet of relationship to consider. Beginning again with the philosophical underpinnings of relationship, John Dewey positions school relationships as central to the aims of education in two ways. First, in educating children to become active members of a democracy, classrooms and schools become laboratories in which to learn the intricacies of human relations that form the foundation of a democratic society. As Dewey so eloquently states, "The subject matter of education consists primarily of the meanings which supply content to existing social life."[26]

Nel Noddings also sees classroom relationships—particularly the teacher-student relationship—as a fundamental experience from which to learn the ethics of living in the greater society. She characterizes the relationship between teacher and student as one based on the ethic of care.[27] In describing the teacher as the "one-caring" and the student as the "cared-for," Noddings theorizes that the

teacher's aim in education is "to preserve and enhance caring in herself and in those with whom she comes in contact."[28] Therefore, the relationship between the teacher and student must personify the ethic of care, in which the teacher is engrossed in the student's learning and the student is responsive, indicating that he has received the teacher's care and has been shaped by it.

In addition to readying students to become active participants in society, interpersonal relationships in school also serve a second purpose: they are the essential foundation of learning. Dewey views the individual as a "being-always-in-a-situation" and the transactions that occurs between an individual and the social environment as the bedrock of knowledge.[29] He theorizes that an individual child's communication with her classmates and teacher is a fundamental way that knowledge is built.[30]

The notion that knowledge is embedded in social interactions is also an idea long espoused by sociocognitive theorists.[31] A fundamental thread running throughout this psychological theory is the argument that knowledge is formed or constructed in interaction with peers, mentors, and the environment and is subsequently internalized for independent use. Research in student self-regulation extends this theory into the realm of academic performance, arguing that students' academic competence develops in the social world and gradually moves to sources in the self.[32] These studies are helpful to this discussion in that they demonstrate an inherent link between interpersonal interactions and cognition and argue that knowledge is built within the surrounding social world. This research, however, does not help us understand how human relationships contribute to the construction of trust in knowledge.

That knowledge is born and shaped in the cradle of human relationships is an idea pioneered over the past two decades by relational psychologists.[33] This field of scholarship posits that psychological growth is embedded in relationships and human development can only be understood in the context of relationships. That is, in order to see how individuals make meaning of the world around them, we

must understand how the forces of human relationships shape their experiences of that world. Carol Gilligan's work in this domain is especially helpful in explaining the theoretical underpinnings of how relationships can shape knowledge.[34] She grounds her theoretical orientation in three phases of human development in which these negotiations can be clearly seen: infancy, boys' early childhood, and girls' adolescence. Gilligan points to infancy research that demonstrates that the infant's world is one of relationship.[35] Not only do infants need their relationships with their caregivers in order to survive but they are also able to affect and change these relationships. They depend on these relationships to help them make sense of all of the stimuli that surround them. Edward Tronick and Katherine Weinberg argue that the capacity to trust knowledge begins in the mutual parent-infant communication cycle.[36] As parents and infants become increasingly skilled in reading each other's cues, in expressing needs and having needs met, infants learn that they are effective communicators and that their caregivers are dependable.[37] The notion of "repair" is central to this idea of mutuality. When parents misread an infant's cue—for example, misreading a hungry cry as a signal to change a diaper, the infant learns to modify his sounds and parents learn the signals that help them regain their synchrony. The notion of mutuality arising from this research suggests that in this active communication between parent and infant—the preeminent teaching-learning relationship—children learn to trust both their perceptions and their communications and develop trust in their parents' capacity to respond. This research demonstrates the inherent link between trust in self and trust in others.

Boys' early childhood is another watershed moment in development at which we can view the ways that relationship shapes emerging knowledge. Gilligan and her colleague, Judy Chu, found that preschool and kindergarten boys negotiate a delicate balance between holding on to what they know to be true (their desire for intimate relationship with peers, parents, and teachers) and com-

plying with the demands of patriarchal forces that surround them (that to be a boy means to break free of the very relationships that sustain them). In this negotiation, boys can disconnect or dissociate from knowledge they hold in order to yield to societal forces.[38] A similar phenomenon can be seen in girls' adolescence. Research over the past two decades has found that when girls enter adolescence and encounter relationships that demand conformity with standards that differ from their own, they are faced with complex psychological decisions that often cause them to dissociate from what they know.[39] Girls may disconnect from knowledge of themselves, disconnect from understandings of social relationships, or conduct a delicate balancing act of negotiating these different kinds of knowledge, depending on the forces they confront.[40]

The studies of both boys and girls point clearly to the ways in which the forces of human relationships shape children's capacities to hold and disconnect from what they know. These findings are supported by other relational psychologists who examine the connections between trusting relationships and trusting self and knowledge.[41] Researchers such as Jean Baker Miller, Irene Stiver, Judith Jordan, and Terrence Real who study relational functioning and health, have found that interpersonal failures—when people feel unsafe in relationships or when relationships lack mutuality—are a driving force in pushing people to disconnect from their knowledge and relationships.[42] Moreover, the key to relational awareness and health is a repair of these disconnections, a coming to know of that which is deemed unacceptable.

The research in relational psychology highlights the interwoven nature of knowledge of self and knowledge of others and provides insight into the psychological processes involved in connecting and disconnecting from both knowledge and significant human relationships. While a portion of the research just discussed was conducted in schools, it did not center on the ways that school relationships shape student learning, nor did it examine the nature of school practices that can support relationships in which students

can bring the full spectrum of their knowledge and diminish the need for disconnecting; these were not the purposes of the studies. Yet, they persuasively suggest that relationships shape emerging knowledge. The next step in this line of research is to bring these theoretical ideas to the world of school. This step requires that we address a key question: How do school relationships shape children's capacity to trust what they learn and know?

Developmental, sociocognitive, and school psychologists also laid the groundwork for examining the interplay between school relationships and student learning. Focusing especially on the impact of these relationships on student motivation, achievement, and engagement in school, researchers have found that positive school relationships significantly affect the quality of student learning.[43] This research, mainly large-scale studies, demonstrates a trend at all levels of the educational cycle—from preschool through high school—that the interpersonal relationships of school shape students' achievement in subject matter performance such as mathematics[44] as well as students' preparedness for the tasks required of schooling.[45] In addition, these studies reveal an inherent connection between students' experiences of schooling and their social-emotional functioning, which is largely dependent on the quality of their school relationships.[46] These studies offer a broad sweep of the terrain of relationships in school and invite closer investigation of *how* school relationships shape the learning process.[47] Investigating the etiology and evolution of trust in school relationships offers us one perspective on the intersection between relationships and learning.

Trust in Self and Knowledge

I begin by considering the notion of trust in self and one's own knowledge and root my understanding in the definition rendered by the children of this study. The students explain that trusting their knowledge means that they can discuss, use, and depend on

their understandings in order to build new ideas as well as identify concepts that they do not understand. When they do not trust their knowledge, they feel worried that they are unable to depend on their ideas, build new understandings, or articulate what they do or do not know. When they do not trust, students worry that they have lied or concealed the truth about themselves to their teachers and peers.[48]

The definition of knowledge employed in this study emerges from the students' varied references to knowledge throughout our discussions. This definition encompasses the three pivotal aspects of the teaching-learning relationship as defined by David Hawkins in his seminal essay "I, Thou, and It":[49] the teacher, the student, and the subject matter. When the students in this study discussed knowledge, they referred to what they knew about themselves: their thinking, feelings, interests, passions, curiosities, doubts, and confidences. They also described what they knew of others: their relationships and their reading of others' intentions, motivations, expressions, and communications. Finally, they described their knowledge of the subject matter of school: the cognitive, academic, intellectual, physical, artistic, and musical ideas they had encountered. Echoing Dewey's idea of the "constant spiral movement of knowledge,"[50] they described knowing as a dynamic process that was in constant interaction with self, others, and the environment.

Trust in Relationships

Just as relationship with self is inherently linked to relationship with others, so too is trust in self rooted in trust in others. I build my understanding of trust in others on the work of philosophers, psychologists, and educators as well as insights from the children who have educated me in my work as a teacher and researcher. When considering the place that trust holds within human relationships in school, it is useful to delineate the features of a trustworthy teaching-learning relationship. There are four central features: (1) the

teacher's capacity to be connected to the student, (2) the teacher's genuine interest in nurturing students' own ideas, (3) collaborative study on the part of teacher and student, and (4) an environment in which trust can prevail.

Teachers' Connectedness

The first feature of trust rests on the teacher's capacity to be connected to the experience of the student.[51] This connectedness rests squarely on a teacher's willingness and ability to be sensitive to and empathic toward a student's social, affective, and cognitive experience in school. The notion of connectedness has been closely examined by relational psychologists[52] and described as having four central aspects: mutual empathy, relational authenticity, inter-subjectivity, and mutuality. Janet Surrey describes mutual empathy as the experience of "seeing the other" and "feeling seen."[53] She describes a reciprocity in this process in which both people must be visible to the other and sense that they are seen. Jean Baker Miller and her colleagues describe relational authenticity as "moment-to-moment responsiveness"[54] in which there is an effort by each person in the relationship to represent themselves "with fullness and truth."[55] In their classic study, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule describe connectedness in teaching as the capacity to "enter into each student's perspective."[56] Jordan speaks of this capacity as "inter-subjectivity," or the capacity to attend and respond to the "subjective inner experience of the other at both a cognitive and affective level."[57] Finally, mutuality, as discussed in the previous section, has been theorized most coherently by the infancy scholars and is central to the concept of connectedness in teaching in that it represents the communication cycle by which teachers and students learn the power of communication and response. As Noddings suggests, this kind of feedback loop, through which teachers and students can read the way their expressions of care have been received by the other, is central in the teaching-learning relationship.[58]

When thinking about connectedness in the teacher-student relationship, we can ask these kinds of questions: When a student is in distress in a classroom, how well can a teacher listen for the roots of the distress? When a student acts out or resists the teacher's agenda, how well can the teacher observe the underpinnings of the unrest? How well can a teacher elicit and recognize a student's intellectual passions and create opportunities for the child to act on them? How genuine and authentic are teachers in their relationships with their students? An eight-year-old boy recently described a young teacher in his school as the "best teacher in the school." Curious about his standards for teaching excellence, I asked him what made her the best teacher in the school. He replied clearly: "When she says hello to me in the hall, she says it like she really means it." His comment illustrates how closely children monitor a teacher's connectedness to their well-being.

Connectedness is a central aspect of a trusting teaching-learning relationship because it is from this standpoint that student and teacher learn to know each other at fundamental levels. The teacher attempts to assume the subjective experience of the student. The student, in turn, feels that she has been seen or recognized and that a place has been made in the classroom for her, in all her complexity. Students learn that they can be effective communicators, that their needs can be met, and that they too can meet the needs of others. They learn that learning is a relational enterprise.

Teachers' Genuine Interest

The second quality of a trustworthy relationship is a teacher's genuine interest in nurturing students' own ideas. This notion is anchored in the work of Eleanor Duckworth and David Hawkins. Duckworth describes this quality as allowing students' own "wonderful ideas" to emerge in the classroom.[59] She argues that it is the opportunity for children to have wonderful ideas of their own that is the essence of intellectual development. In nurturing children's ideas and helping them extend their emerging theories, Duckworth

suggests that teachers give children "reason"—they attempt to understand the meaning in children's words or behaviors—in order to take their thinking "one step further."[60] David Hawkins links teachers' interest in children's thinking with the creation of trust.[61] He argues that when teachers value students' ideas, teachers create a "compact of trust." The nature of this compact is one in which "the teacher seeks to extend the powers of the learner and promises to abridge them only transiently and to the end of extending them."[62] In doing so, teachers acquire authority. Hawkins's idea of authority is contrary to a traditional conception in which a teacher may look for obedience and compliance as indications of his authority.

Not too long ago, I observed this notion of authority in a preschool classroom. A child had grabbed hold of some multicolored masking tape and begun, carefully and attentively, to make colorful tape designs along the legs of a chair, looping the tape around the leg to create a barbershop-pole pattern. Many teachers might have chastised the student for tampering with classroom furniture. This gifted teacher stood back and watched the child's purposeful construction, offering him the opportunity to explore the qualities and aesthetics of this material. Allowing the construction to grow, she provided more tape and other materials and watched as other children joined the project. By the end of the week, the children had produced what they called a "sculpture," which they displayed with pride on classroom project night.

The quality of the trust between this teacher and her students is rich indeed. The teacher trusted the students' intentions to be constructive and creative, and the students trusted the teacher to be interested in, supportive of, and provider of the requisite materials for their explorations. This story suggests that in order for students to trust that their teachers are genuinely interested in their learning, teachers must express curiosity about the ideas that students generate and allow opportunity for exploration of these ideas.

Teacher-Student Collaborative Inquiry

The third quality of trust is that of collaborative study between teacher and student. This idea is eloquently argued by R. P. McDermott in describing the social contexts that support student learning.[63] McDermott suggests that trust emerges when teachers and students engage in a shared focus of study that involves collective work and active exchange of ideas among all members of the classroom community. Again, this idea shifts the locus of authority from the teacher as "all-knowing" to the teacher as a learner who is asking questions and seeking, together with her students, to craft new knowledge.

In thinking about shared inquiry as a fundamental feature of trust, Hawkins's notion of the "It," or subject matter, as a pivotal point in the triarchic nature of the student-teacher relationship is especially clear. That is, for a trusting relationship to emerge, a study of central importance to both the student and the teacher is essential. A graduate student of mine recently recounted how the introduction of a classroom pet, a frog, shaped the environment of her multi-age classroom. She discovered that through the introduction of this animal into her classroom, a new focus of study emerged for her and the students. They became partners in the discovery of everything from the climate necessary for the frog's survival to the biology and anatomy of the animal, from its feeding habits to its preferences. As she watched study of the frog deepen, she began to notice new social relationships emerging, and she noticed the quality of the trust between her and her students growing more profound. As the collaborative study of the class pet became more intense, the relationships in the classroom grew, as well.

An Environment of Safety

The fourth aspect of trustworthy relationships involves creating an environment in which trust can prevail. The key feature here is

the quality of safety. Students in this study explained that they were only prepared to share reflections on their learning if they knew that teachers would hold these conversations in confidence and not reveal them in front of others. Towler and Broadfoot likewise identified privacy, confidentiality, and invitations to challenge teachers' authority as key features of safety.[64] Sustaining an environment in which students and teachers feel safe to build new knowledge requires avenues for protected conversation and exchange of ideas.

To create safety for all voices, including dissenting ones, to be heard, there must be permission to disagree. This is an understanding recently articulated by a group of teachers at the Robert C. Parker School in upstate New York, who joined with colleagues in the area to study the ways that issues of race played themselves out in their school. In our studies, we came to understand that while "safety" can be protective for some students, it can be a silencing force for others, making it difficult for students to express dissenting opinions. We saw that the ideal kind of safety was one that allowed people to "be dangerous," to take risks, to voice that which had not been said. We also saw that the definition of safety changes for each individual, reflecting that person's sociocultural identity, the power dynamics in the classroom, and the surrounding community.[65]

Underlying these four qualities of trustworthy relationship is the value of freedom. An environment in which trustworthy relationships can thrive requires that students be free to make choices that reflect their interests, to disagree with teachers' perspectives, and to take risks with ideas that are new and not fully formed. In short, trustworthy relationships in the classroom can be understood as a commitment to honoring both privacy and dissent, sharing authority among the members of the class, and creating a collaborative focus of study through which teachers and students can actively form a community of learners.

Trust and Relationship, Trust and Knowledge

There is a "chicken-and-egg" quality to a discussion of trust and relationship. While discussing relationship, we see that trust is an inherent component of this human connection. While discussing trust, we see that it is lived out in the context of interpersonal relationships. Rather than viewing one concept as the cause of the other, we can see trust and relationship as inextricably linked, as mutually dependent. At times, the distinction between trust and relationship can feel artificial or imposed. Yet it is a distinction worth considering in an effort to understand the human context that best supports children's learning. Similarly, the distinction between knowing something and trusting that knowledge is a subtle and important one to consider. In the following chapters, the students describe these distinctions, highlighting that trust is a quality that makes both relationships and knowledge robust and enduring. This discussion seeks to disentangle the complexities involved in building this trust.

Essentially, children come to school with many processes of knowing fully in gear. They learn quickly that some of what they know cannot be spoken in school, while other kinds of knowledge are invited and have hallowed spaces in the classroom. That is, the relationships in school are critical contexts for shaping students' connections to what they know. These relationships shape the ways that students can trust what they know. In the chapters that follow, the students and I talk openly about the ways that the relational contexts shape their learning, craft what they know, and facilitate a confidence, dependability, durability, and trust in what they know.

Notes

1. See Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cook-Sather, 2002; Howes & Ritchie, 2002; Koplow, 2002; Meier, 2002; Perrotti & Westheimer, 2001; Watson & Ecken, 2003.

2. Paris & Newman, 1990; Patrick, 1997; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997; Schunk, 1990, 1996.
3. Piaget, 1952/1963, 1970; Rogoff, 1990; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985.
4. Erikson, 1963; Kohlberg, 1984; Maslow, 1970.
5. For a thorough discussion of relational psychological theories, see Spencer, 2000.
6. Gilligan, Rogers, & Tolman, 1991; Jordan and others, 1991; Miller and others, 1999. Thanks to Judy Roth for sharing the Miller source with me.
7. See Spencer, 2000, for a clear overview of the relational psychoanalytic theory.
8. Murray & Trevarthen, 1985; Stern, 1985; Tronick, 1989; Tronick & Weinberg, 1997.
9. Chu, 2000; Gilligan, 2003; Pollack, 1998, 2000; Way 1998; Way & Chu, 2004.
10. Brown, 1998, 2003; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Tolman, 2002.
11. Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 22.
12. Many thanks to the participants in my Fall 2003 doctoral seminar "Relational Context of Teaching and Learning" for this insight.
13. Miller & Stiver, 1997.
14. Gilligan, 2003, p. 169.
15. Greene, 1973. Thanks to Carol Rodgers for directing me to Greene's terminology of presence.
16. Gilligan, 2004, p. 105.
17. Dewey, 1938/1963, p. 44. Many thanks to Carol Rodgers for pointing me to this passage.
18. Harriet Cuffaro, personal correspondence, December 1, 2003.
19. Dewey, 1910/1933.
20. Dewey, 1910/1933, p. 140.
21. Damasio, 1999.
22. Cuffaro, 1995; Dewey, 1910/1933, 1916/1966; Malaguzzi, 1993; Rodgers, 2002a.

23. Gilligan, 1996; Kegan, 1982; Miller, 1986; Stern, 1985; Surrey, 1991.
24. Pianta, 1999.
25. Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Chu, 2000; Gilligan, 2003.
26. Dewey, 1916/1966, p. 192.
27. Noddings, 2003.
28. Noddings, 2003, p. 172.
29. Cuffaro, 1995, p. 24.
30. Dewey, 1916/1966.
31. Duckworth, 1987; Piaget, 1952/1963; Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985.
32. See, for example, Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997.
33. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1993, 1996, 2003a; Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, & Belenky, 1996; Jordan, 1995; Miller, 1986.
34. Gilligan, 1993, 1996, 2003.
35. Winnicott, 1965; Stern, 1985; Trevarthen, 1979.
36. Tronick & Weinberg, 1997.
37. Tronick, 1989.
38. Gilligan, 2003; Chu, 2000.
39. Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1996; Gilligan, Rogers, & Noel, 1992; Taylor, Gilligan, & Sullivan, 1995.
40. Brown, 1998; Brown & Gilligan, 1992.
41. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, & Belenky, 1996; Jordan, 1995; Miller, 1986; Ward, 2001.
42. Jordan, 1995; Miller, 1986; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Real, 1998.
43. See Birch & Ladd, 1997; Goodenow, 1992; Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Pianta, 1999; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000.
44. For example, Ross, Hogabaum-Gray, & Rolheiser, 2002.
45. For example, Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997.
46. See Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000.

47. It is important to note that the theoretical orientation of this body of research is often based on the paradigm that identifies maturity as individuation and autonomy. A good example of this is in Birch and Ladd's 1997 article focusing on the teacher-child relationship. In this research, they identify five-year-old students' "dependency" on teachers as a negative quality of relationship.
48. This definition of trust in knowledge and self is derived from the interviews conducted for this study, as well as interviews conducted for related studies. See Raider-Roth, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2004, 2005.
49. Hawkins, 1974.
50. Dewey, 1910/1933, p. 140.
51. Connectedness is a dimension of a teacher's presence. For a more extensive discussion of presence, see Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2004, and Rodgers, 2002b.
52. See Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Jordan and others, 1991; Jordan, 1995; Miller, 1986; Miller & Stiver, 1997.
53. Surrey, 1991.
54. Miller and others, 1999, p. 2.
55. Miller & Stiver, 1997, p. 54.
56. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 227.
57. Jordan, 1991, p. 82.
58. Noddings, 2003.
59. Duckworth, 1987.
60. Duckworth, 1987, pp. 86–87, 96–97.
61. Hawkins, 1973.
62. Hawkins, 1973, p. 9.
63. McDermott, 1977.
64. Towler & Broadfoot, 1992.
65. Raider-Roth and others, 2003; Wilma Waithe, personal correspondence, June 16, 2004; Keely Ball, personal correspondence, June 21, 2004.